

REMARKS

By the present amendment, the claims 1 and 6 have been amended, and new claims 11-26 have been added. Support for the added recitation in claim 1 and new claims 11 and 12 is found in the original application, for example, on page 4, last paragraph, and page 5, ninth paragraph of the specification. Support for new claims 13-18 is found in original claim 1 in combination with original claims 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10, respectively, and additional support for new claims 19-24 is found in original claim 7. Additional support for claims 25-26 is found in the original application, for example on page 20, last paragraph ("coated") and the Figures ("directly").

Claims 1-26 are pending in the present application. Independent claims 1, 13-18 and 25 are each directed to a laminated optical device. Claims 2-6 and 8-12 are dependent on claim 1. Claims 7 and 19-26 are each directed to a liquid-crystal display apparatus and are dependent on claims 1, 13-18 and 25, respectively.

In the Office Action, claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. It is alleged in the Office Action that the limitation "on one or each of opposite surfaces" lacks antecedent basis.

Claim 6 has been amended to recite that the optical device has to opposite surfaces, which provides the lacking antecedent basis. Accordingly, it is submitted that the indefiniteness rejection should be withdrawn.

Next, in the Office Action, claims 1-8 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by US 2002/0140882 (Kitagawa).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. The Kitagawa application is cited under section 102(e)(2) (US application filed before filing date of application being examined, but published after) because the filing date of the Kitagawa application was January 14, 2002, and its publication date was October 3, 2002, whereas the present application was filed on January 15, 2002.

However, Applicants submit the attached Declaration under 37 C.F.R. 1.131 to show that they made the presently claimed invention before January 14, 2002, the effective date of Kitagawa.

Specifically, the Declaration establishes that the inventors were in possession of the invention and had reduced the invention to practice before May 29, 2000. A certified copy of prior Japanese application No. 2000-157713 (JP'713) filed on May 29, 2000 by the present inventors, along with a verified English translation thereof, are enclosed with the Declaration.

The marked-up version makes clear that the substance of the presently claimed invention had been made prior to the filing of JP'713 on May 29, 2000. Accordingly, Kitagawa is removed as a reference against the presently claimed invention.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejection over Kitagawa should be withdrawn.

Next, in the Office Action, claims 1 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by US 6,342,934 (Kameyama).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Kameyama discloses a polarizing layer having a thickness of at least 5 micrometers (see Kameyama at col.

11, lines 43-62). Thus, Kameyama is completely silent as to a polarizing layer having a thickness of less than 5 μm , as recited in present claim 1.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejection over Kameyama should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.


Serial Number: 10/044,961

Group Art Unit: 2871

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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Encls.: Declaration under Rule 1.131
with Certified Copy of JP 2000-157713
Verified English Translation
Petition for One-Month Extension of Time